



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

the lady dwelt. This, of course, can refer to nothing but *The Kingis Quair*.

The difficulties, on the other hand, are these:

No Scottish writer whose works are extant, except Maior, mentions *The Kingis Quair*. Dunbar, in his list of dead Scottish poets, does not include James. While the omission is singular, it can not do away with the fact that the poem (as the MS. shows) existed and was attributed to James in Dunbar's lifetime, at least as early as 1488, and probably much earlier, as no one has suggested that the scribe of the Bodleian MS. was the author.

Another difficulty consists in the close and unmistakable imitation of parts of *The Court of Love*, a poem, as was said, once attributed to Chaucer, but which Prof. Skeat asserts can not possibly be earlier than the close of the fifteenth century. But, with due respect, it may be said that Prof. Skeat is altogether too cocksure of his canons in matters so fluid as phraseology and versification. Because Chaucer observed certain rules, it does not follow that all his contemporaries or imitators followed them. Who, judging by language and verse alone, would take Chaucer and Langland to be Londoners and contemporaries? And in this very matter Prof. Skeat has involved himself in an awkward dilemma. In the introduction to his excellent edition of the *Quair*, he attributes it unhesitatingly to James, fixing its composition in 1423, and yet (while discussing the language) declares that *The Court of Love* cannot be earlier than the close of the fifteenth century. He ignores the contradiction by passing over in silence the palpable resemblances between the two. There are but three possible explanations: either James imitated *The Court of Love*, in which case it must be older than Prof. Skeat thinks; or the English poet imitated James, which is not the least likely; or both have followed some older, perhaps, French, poem. It is remarkable that while the author of the *Quair* dedicates his poem to his "dear masters, Gower and Chaucer," putting Gower first, there is no imitation of Gower discoverable. Could he have considered Gower the author of *The Court of Love*?

The difficulties arising from the language,

which the critic thinks would have been perfect Midland, if written by James; and from the rather loose indications in the poem of his age when taken, and the time of his capture, which the critic considers as conflicting with other historical data—these do not strike the present writer as very cogent; and, on the whole, we cannot think that Mr. Brown has proved his case. He has, however, made a very interesting contribution to Scottish literary criticism, which should stimulate others to a further sifting of the problem. His calendar of the Bodleian MS., and his collection from the records of all the entries throwing light on James's captivity, are particularly valuable.

WM. HAND BROWNE.

*Johns Hopkins University.*

### MYTHS AND LEGENDS.

*Myths of Northern Lands*, narrated with special reference to Literature and Art, by H. A. GUERBER. 12mo, pp. 319. New York: American Book Company.

*Legends of the Middle Ages*, etc., by the same. 12mo, pp. 340. New York: American Book Company.

THE conscientious and faithful compiler, who evinces literary taste and ability in the arrangement of the varied material which is brought, for our convenience, into compact form, will lay even the scholar under a debt of gratitude. H. A. Guerber seems to possess in a marked degree the qualities and scholarship necessary for such work, and the two volumes named above meet a long and deeply-felt want for a gathering-up and grouping-together (in a manner attractive to a large circle of readers and not without value to the student) of the threads of narrative and myth which run through Occidental literature for the last thousand years and more. Each of the books aims to give outlines of the legends or myths current in or dating from, the period of which it treats, omitting critical discussion and conflicting details. I believe that such books can be of great value, not only to the "young student" and "the English student of letters," whom the author has especially in mind, but also to the man of culture whose life-work or line of

thought does not coincide with or permit the comparative and critical study of the sources and subjects of modern literature. And the specialist in this line will also often find them a convenient jog to a tardy memory.—To quote from the preface to the *Legends*:

"Many allusions in the literature of our own day lose much of their force simply because these legends are not available to the general reader."

but he has them here in attractive and convenient analyses.

The outlines are told in direct but not childish language, and the mature reader will not feel that he is consulting a boy's story book when turning to these interesting pages for information. At the same time, Miss Guerber has treated the many *risqué* incidents in medieval narrative with great tact: Nothing of the story is mutilated, but nothing which might excite the fancy of the youthful reader has been included. I refer, for one example among many, to the story of Tristan and Iseult and the power of the love potion. Exception might be taken, as departing from the scope of the work, to the space devoted to the "Story of Frithiof," which is but little more than a synopsis of Tegnér's poem. To be sure it is preceded by an outline of the Thorsten saga, but yet it seems to me that this chapter is inconsistent with the usual apparent practice of the author of drawing her outlines after the original.

The influence of the themes of Northern and medieval myth and legend upon modern literature is shown in both volumes by frequent quotations from Tennyson, William Morris, Longfellow and others, illustrative of statements in the text. Excellent indexes enhance the value of the volumes as books of reference. In general, it must be said that it is very refreshing to find such pleasant and useful work performed so modestly (see the prefaces) and so well that one does not notice the great labor that has been required.

A word concerning the illustrations, since they form so large a part of the attraction of the book for younger readers: They are nearly all reproductions of works by good, even celebrated, artists, and in many cases will serve to impress the text upon the reader.

It is a pity that the indifferent pictures by Pixis have been included. Is it, perhaps, the fault of the half-tone reproduction that the beautiful Iseult is so unattractive? Decided objection must be made to one or two pictures as being misleading. For instance, "Parzival uncovering the Holy Grail" is evidently a scene from Wagner's dramatic opera, and is only mystifying to any one who tries to connect it with the text of the book referring to Parzival's elevation to the guardianship of the Grail. Another instance will serve to show what discrimination is necessary in choosing ready-made illustrations. On p. 130 of *Myths* we read:

"Freya herself, like all the heathen divinities, was declared a demon or witch, and banished to the mountain peaks of Norway, Sweden, or Germany, where the Brocken is pointed out as her special abode, and the general trysting place of her demon train on Valpurgisnacht."

The illustration to this is a reproduction, under the title of "The Witches' Dance," of von Kreling's picture of the following from the *Brockenscene in Faust*:

"Mephisto, siehst du dort  
Ein blasses, schönes Kind allein und ferne stehen?" etc.,  
with Faust and Mephistopheles in the foreground regarding the apparition!

GEORGE STUART COLLINS.

*Polytechnic Institute, Brooklyn.*

## THE COLLINGHAM RUNIC INSCRIPTION.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—In his article in the June number of this Journal, Professor Hempl incidentally treats of the "exceedingly valuable" Collingham inscription, which he reads:—*æftar answini cu(ning)*. His authorities are (1) Stephens's figure (ii, *recte* i, 391) and (2) the report of Haigh (Stephens iii, 183). As to Stephens's figure, the first rune on the right side may be read either  $\mathfrak{F}$  a or  $\mathfrak{O}$  o, it being impossible to tell whether the short line that would complete the  $\mathfrak{F}$  is an intentional up-stroke, or part of the hatching of the surface. Stephens, for whom the drawing was made, says that  $\mathfrak{F}$ , not  $\mathfrak{O}$ , is meant. The figure, then, represents the reading *æftar onswini cu. . .* The reading